

APS Education Committee members meet with NSF officials

On 12 December four members of The American Physical Society representing the Committee on Education and the Panel on Public Affairs met with Bassam Shakhshiri, assistant director of the National Science Foundation for the newly reconstituted Directorate of Science and Engineering Education (see *PHYSICS TODAY*, January, page 55). The APS delegation requested the meeting to exchange views and to open communications with NSF on the crisis in science education in the United States.

Judy Franz (Indiana University), head of the APS Committee on Education from 1982 through 1984, led the delegation, which consisted of Eugen Merzbacher (University of North Carolina), chairman of the Panel on Public Affairs Task Force on Education; Robert Resnick (Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute), a member of the Committee on Education, and Kenneth W. Ford (Molecular Biophysics Technology Inc, Philadelphia), the new chairman of the APS Committee on Education.

The NSF participants, besides Shakhshiri, were Walter Gillespie, deputy assistant director; Jerry Bell, division director, Teacher Enhancement and Informal Science Education; Frank Collea, program director for Information in Science and Mathematics Education; Kenneth Hoffman (MIT), chairman of the advisory committee for Science and Engineering Education (SEE); Pat Nicely, senior staff associate; and Jennifer Vance, special assistant.

During a meeting that lasted more than two hours, the APS members described current Committee on Education activities of APS, as well as joint activities of APS, AAPT and AIP. The delegates also discussed current thinking about future APS activities, including efforts that APS hopes to carry out jointly with other professional societies. Shakhshiri said he was glad that the APS Committee on Education had begun to work with other groups by participating, for example, in the Pyramid and the Triangle Conferences (see page 111). The NSF participants urged APS to increase involvement with other physics societies and stated that they

would welcome continued input from professional societies on the future directions for physics education.

APS and NSF participants in the meeting on 12 December also searched for ways in which they could work together. APS learned that NSF plans to put a new emphasis on elementary- and middle-school programs and would budget about half the Education Directorate's funds for grades K-12. NSF participants urged APS, in light of the Society's limited resources, to view the projects APS undertakes as part of broader educational planning by the entire physics community.

The December meeting with NSF officials formed the backdrop for a wide-ranging discussion of priorities at the 21 January meeting of the APS Education Committee in Toronto. The Committee welcomes suggestions from other physicists and urges those who have ideas and offers of help to contact



FORD

Ford directly at Molecular Biophysics Technology Inc, 3508 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104.

APS award for undergraduate research

The Research Corporation, a private foundation for the advancement of science and technology, has agreed to sponsor a new American Physical Society award for research in an undergraduate institution. This award was established late in 1984 by a grant from the Research Corporation, a private foundation for the advancement of science and technology. The award will be given to a physics faculty member in recognition of work that contributed substantially to physics research and provided inspirational guidance and encouragement to undergraduate students participating in the research. The purpose of this award is to recognize research by faculty at undergraduate institutions where undergraduate students have made important research contributions in physics, and to encourage faculty to involve students in such research.

The award consists of \$3000, an allowance for travel expenses to the APS meeting at which the award ceremony will take place and a certificate citing the recipient's contribution.

Nominees must be faculty members of predominantly undergraduate institutions in the United States. The nominee's department may offer a program leading to a master's degree but may not have a doctoral program in physics.

The award winner will be chosen by an APS selection committee consisting of distinguished physicists appointed by the president of The American Physical Society. The award and certificate will be presented at an award ceremony at a major APS meeting.

Ramavataram Fund

An open meeting of the Kilambi Ramavataram Fund Committee will be held on Monday afternoon, 25 March, in Room 322 of the Baltimore Convention Center from 4-6 pm. All physicists are invited to attend for discussion and suggestions about the future plans for this new program, which provides for Indian physics teachers to visit universities in North America. □